

Changes to Bereavement Support from 6 April 2017



Department
for Work &
Pensions

From 6 April 2017 the way that DWP bereavement benefits work is changing, and a new form of bereavement support called 'Bereavement Support Payment' (BSP) will be introduced. This fact sheet summarises what those changes are, and what they mean to those making a benefit claim. Nothing will change for those who are already receiving bereavement benefits, or for anyone making a claim related to the death of a spouse or civil partner which occurs on or before 5 April 2017.

Current bereavement benefits

At present there are three forms of bereavement benefits available:

- **Bereavement Payment:** a one-off lump sum payment of £2000, paid on the death of a spouse or civil partner.
- **Bereavement allowance:** a weekly payment of up to £112.55 payable to a surviving spouse or civil partner, aged 45 or over at the time of bereavement, for up to 52 weeks after their spouse or civil partner's death.
- **Widowed Parents Allowance:** an allowance payable to a surviving spouse or civil partner who is pregnant or is entitled to child benefit for a qualifying child or young person. Payment ceases if the recipient marries, remarries, forms a civil partnership, or co-habits, or if entitlement to Child Benefit ceases.

Each of these benefits has different eligibility requirements, which include, for example, claimant age, and the National Insurance record of the spouse or civil partner.

An applicant needs to make only one application to be considered for all three of these.

More detailed information on each of these benefits can be found online at www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/bereavement or

by calling the Bereavement Service Helpline on 0345 606 0265 (Welsh language 0345 606 0275).

What's changing

From 6 April 2017 a new form of bereavement support will be introduced called 'Bereavement Support Payment' (BSP). This will replace and simplify existing types of bereavement support listed above, and extend eligibility to those under the age of 45.

- BSP can provide a one-off lump sum followed by up to 18 regular monthly payments.
- There will be two rates of support with BSP, for those with, and without dependent children: those with children, or who are pregnant, receive £3500 lump sum and £350 monthly payment, whilst those without dependents will receive a £2500 lump sum and £100 monthly payment.
- BSP is not means tested and all payments are tax free.
- Marrying, cohabiting or entering a civil partnership will not affect BSP eligibility.
- The deceased spouse or civil partner must normally have paid National Insurance; however contribution requirements are reduced and simplified with BSP.



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What applicants need to do

No action is required in advance of making a claim. Full details of BSP will be updated in advance of 6 April 2017 on the government's website, www.gov.uk.

Further information

If you believe you are currently eligible for bereavement support, then you should apply for existing bereavement benefits.

You can find further specific information on existing bereavement support online:

Bereavement Payment:

- www.gov.uk/bereavement-payment

Bereavement allowance:

- www.gov.uk/bereavement-allowance

Widowed Parents Allowance:

- www.gov.uk/widowed-parents-allowance

